
US Navy Enters Disputed South China Sea Amid Row With Beijing

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A U.S. Navy destroyer sailed near islands claimed by China in the South China Sea on Friday, the U.S. military said, a move likely to anger Beijing.

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The busy waterway is one of a growing number of flashpoints in the U.S.-Chinese relationship, which include an escalating trade war, American sanctions on China’s military and U.S. relations with Taiwan.

Commander Reann Mommsen, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Navy’s Seventh Fleet, told Reuters that the destroyer Wayne E. Meyer challenged territorial claims in the operation, including what she described as excessive Chinese claims around the Paracel Islands, which are also claimed by Taiwan and Vietnam.

“...China has attempted to claim more internal waters, territorial sea, exclusive economic zone, and continental shelf than it is entitled under international law,” Mommsen said.

China’s defense and foreign ministries did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The United States on Thursday welcomed China's renewed purchases of U.S. farm goods while maintaining the threat of U.S. tariff hikes as the world's two largest economies prepared the ground for talks aimed at breaking the logjam in their trade war.

China and the United States have traded barbs in the past over what Washington has said is Beijing's militarisation of the South China Sea by building military installations on artificial islands and reefs in disputed waters.
